

January 15, 2017

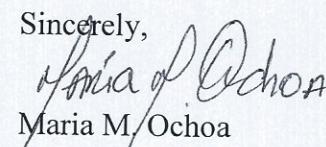
Dear Judge Harpool,

Hello, my name is Maria Ochoa, Carlos Tapia's wife of almost 19 years. We were asked to write these character letters for Carlos for his upcoming court for sentencing. I am sure that you have read many of these letters throughout your career as a federal judge. Therefore, I am going to get straight to the point.

I am aware that what Carlos has done is wrong and that he will be doing some time in prison. Carlos is a good person. He is not a criminal. Bad choices and decisions were made by him, but he is still a good man. I still remember the day when Carlos got taken away in April of 2015. DEA agents were in our house searching for what I believe was illegal drugs and money. I am sure you have read their report. Anyway, I remember one of the agents telling me that our house wasn't like any of the other houses they have searched in the past. He said that when searching a house there is always boxes of brand new household item or brand new personal items such as shoes, watches and clothes throughout the house. Yes, I do understand that selling illegal drugs is what is called making "easy" money. However, and I am in no way making excuses for his actions, this was not the case here. Carlos had a great burden on his shoulders since he was the one who not only financially supported his immediate family, but he financially supported his parents and brothers and their families. Up to this day, I still do not understand the why he would do that, but that is the type of person he is. He was always looking out for his own.

I am writing this letter for Carlos but also for our sons, Carlos Tapia, Jr., and Victor Tapia. They are the ones who have suffered the most these past 2 years with this entire situation. Victor had a scholarship for KU, which was lost due to his emotional distress and not wanting to leave his brother and me by ourselves. Carlos Jr. is still in high school getting ready to graduate this year in May. However, Carlos's absence has also affected him in so many ways. Carlos is a wonderful father and our sons miss him so much. He has always been there for them every step of the way while growing up teaching them how to become responsible young men. My heart hurts for our sons when I see them and knowing that Carlos has missed and will miss a lot of memorable moments of their lives. Carlos has always been a great moral support to them in all they've done; from school to their baseball days and everything in between. (He still is from where he is now.) I know the pain and sadness of not having a father around feels like. These are feelings that I do not wish upon anyone, especially on my sons.

Judge Harpool, as the Christian man that you are, I am asking to please touch your heart and be lenient on Carlos' sentencing when that time comes. I know that you will make the right decision, no matter what that is. Carlos will always be the father of my sons, but it would be more delightful if he can be with them sooner than later. Thank you so much for taking the time to read not just this letter but all of the letters that were written for Carlos. God Bless.

Sincerely,

Maria M. Ochoa